



Department of Planning, Housing, & Community Development

Mayor, Richard C. David

Director, Jennie Skeadas-Sherry, AICP

Meeting Date: 27, October 2015
Staff Report: Commission on Architecture & Urban Design Members
Subject: **13-15 Smith Avenue- Determination of Significance**
Tax ID: 144.44-3-10 and 144.44-3-21
Case: CAUD 2015-60

A. Review Requested

On October 6 2015, the Applicant, Prescott D. Perkins submitted an application for Design Review for the premises located at 13-15 Smith Avenue, tax map numbers 144.44-3-10 and 144.44-3-21. The Applicant intends to demolish the building(s). The structure is older than forty (40) years old, and must be reviewed by The Commission on Architecture and Urban Design (CAUD) before a demolition permit(s) can be issued.

B. Proposal

The Applicant has proposed to demolish a large commercial office building on site. The building has suffered structural damage from age and neglect, which has caused deterioration of roofing, flooring and overall exterior of the building. The interior is also dilapidated; infested with rodents and insects. Vagrants and vandals have stripped the premises of copper piping and its clear there have been break-ins. The Applicant intends to purchase the eastern portion of 15 Smith Avenue, where the building in question sits, and also purchase 13 Smith Avenue, currently a vacant lot, to construct a 2,016 square-foot building on the site for use as a pet animal crematorium.

C. Staff Findings

Demolition Criteria

1. *An outstanding example of a structure or memorial representative of its era, either past or present.*

There is no information to support these criteria.

2. *One of the few remaining examples of past architectural style or combinations of styles.*

A specific style cannot be identified because of significant alteration to the building. There is no information to support these criteria.

3. *The place where an historical event of significance to the City, region, state or nation, or representative activity of a past era took place.*

There is no evidence that any events of historic significance occurred at this home.

D. Property History and Condition

Year of Construction	Late 19 th or early 20 th century.
Land Use	I-3 Heavy Industrial, The building appears to have been a commercial office space, use previous to that was most likely residential. The building is currently vacant.
Significance	<p>While the City Assessment records indicate this building was constructed around 1970, it is more likely that this is a date of the last major alteration of the building. The original structure on site was likely constructed in the late 19th century. Sanborn and Hopkins Maps of this area do not indicate a plate for this site until 1918, while this building is outside of the plate area. It's likely that this building and others in the area existed before this date because of the style and materials identified on the building. North of this building existed the Binghamton Brick Company Site; as indicated on the 1918 Sanborn Map. Staff has not been able to find an exact date of construction at this time.</p> <p>The massing of the building as well as the materials, including the back windows, and some existing ornamental siding along the cross gables of the south façade indicate this building to be from an early construction period. It is unclear what particular style the building was at its original construction due to significant alterations over time and use, however it is obvious this building has always been vernacular in nature.</p>
Condition	The building is heavily dilapidated on the exterior and interior with broken windows and signs of break-in and vandalism. This building is in poor condition and appears to have been vacant for an extended period of time.

E. Photographs



West and South facing facades (Oct. 2015)



West façade, front facing street (Oct. 2015)



West façade, front facing street (Oct. 2015)



Portion of the East facing façade. (Oct. 2015)



Interior deterioration, includes vandalism and animal infestation evidenced by rat feces
(photo provided by Applicant)



More details of interior extent of deterioration. (Photo provided by Applicant)